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1956

Clinton Center Baptist Church 125th Anniversary

The 125th anniversary of the founding of the Clinton Center Baptist Church was well attended on Nov. 10 and 11. On Sunday, Nov. 11 the church was filled with members and former members of the congregation. A pleasant time was had renewing acquaintances.

The program on Nov. 10 opening at 2 p. m. featured song service, Rev. R. Edwards; scripture, Rev. Fay Crossman; prayer, Rev. Charles Capper; violin solo, R. V. Stanton; recognition of guests; music, men's quartette; church history, Mrs. Hobart Curtis and Mrs. Laura Rude; hymn and quartette, the ministers. Letters were read from those who could not attend, Mrs. Myrtle Curtis doing this. Benediction. Supper was served by the ladies. For the evening, the song service was led by Mrs. Allister MacKenzie, wife of the late Rev. MacKenzie who was a former pastor. He was at the church for its 120th anniversary and Mrs. MacKenzie said it was the last sermon she heard him preach. The program also included scripture, Donald Bartholomay; prayer, Rev. Capper; solo, Leroy Spoor; special music, choir; history of the pastorate, Mrs. MacKenzie; address, Rev. Milo Singer, pastor of the Welsch Baptist church, Wilkes-Barre. He was pastor here 10 years ago. Duet was sung by Miss Clara Terrel and Mrs. Dorothy Hankinson. Benediction closed the service.

Sunday's program: organ prelude, choir response and hymn; invocation, Rev. Wallace McKnight; anthem, choir; selections by layman from the Berean Baptist church; sermon, Norton Vail of Carbondale; hymn and benediction. The luncheon featured a large beautiful tiered cake made by ~~Mrs. Marian Lillie~~ and Mrs. Edna Singer with the name and date 1831-1956 in yellow on white icing.

Mrs. E. H. Varcoe was chairman of publicity.

Church History

The Clinton Center Baptist church is 125 years old today, Nov. 10, 1956. The writer is indebted to historical sketches and facts found in associational minutes and history of Clinton Township, and facts will be given as they are today. Records show that in 1811 Alva Norton came to Wayne county from Connecticut. At Mt. Pleasant, he found a young man who had been sent out with some sheep so the two men came down the old North and South road to the base of the mountain opposite what is now the Clinton Center Baptist church. They built a cabin and split bass wood poles for a floor. Next year others came and they all were Baptists and held service in their homes. In 1813 Alva Norton conducted the first Bible school in Wayne County. In 1814, Rev. Elijah Peck, pastor of the Mt. Pleasant Church began preaching once a month at the home of Levi Norton. He continued preaching 7 or 8 years. Oct. 23, 1831, the members residing in Clinton were granted letters of dismissal from the Mt. Pleasant Church met at the home of Deacon Rufus Grenell to consider the proprietry of calling a council of members from sister churches to recognize them as a separate church.

On Nov. 4 the brethern met, heard and adopted a covenant, articles of Faith and practice. The report was presented and adopted and a call issued for a council of recognition Nov. 10, 1831. The council agreed to recognize the new church with 23 charter members.

Services were held in Deacon Grenell's house for a time then occupied the school house for 14 years which stood on the line of W. Myron Nestor (now A. C. Singer) and F. E. Loomis (now Arthur Corey). The first meeting house was completed and opened for worship in the autumn of 1845 and on Jan. 19, 1846, the charter was granted and title given as "The First Baptist Church of Clinton". From 1831 to 1855 the church's history was not one of uninterrupted serenity. They were stormy years, many of them in the history of our nation and the church most naturally in common with other churches partook of the Spirit of the Times. On July 25, 1851, the church was totally destroyed by a hurricane, some of the material being carried a great distance. A new church was built and dedicated January 24, 1855.

In the early history of this church, they had choir and choir leaders. After 25 years from its organization it was voted to have Alvin Griswold bring his bass violin to lead the choir. In 1866, it was voted by the church to raise money to get a cabinet organ. Since then we have had musical instruments for leadership. In the early 60s P. F. Bliss held a two weeks convention in this church coming from Honesdale. In 1872, the church united with the Wayne Baptist Association and since that time has taken an active part in all meetings and councils. In 1877